

Applicant: KRAENZEL *et al.*
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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ computer-implemented method, comprising the steps of:

 enabling one or more users to declare, and associate information with, one or more topics, wherein associated information for a declared topic comprises at least one of a topic description, or one or more keywords relating to the topic;

 storing declared topics and their associated information;

 monitoring the computing activities of a user ~~of a computer;~~

 determining if the ~~computer~~ user appears to be interested in a declared topic based on the monitored activities and based on ~~information stored in a database that is associated with the declared topic~~ topic's associated information; and

 notifying the ~~computer~~ user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic if it appears that the ~~computer~~ user is interested in the declared topic.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises the step of monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user.
3. (cancelled)

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4. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user comprises the step of retrieving from an e-mail server one or more e-mail messages addressed to the user and/or sent by the user and examining the contents of those e-mail messages.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises the step of examining one or more instant messages sent to and/or from the user.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises the step of monitoring one or more search request messages sent from the user.

7. (cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
determining whether the ~~computer~~ user desires to receive information about the declared topic after notifying the ~~computer~~ user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic; and

~~retrieving from the database information about the declared topic, wherein the information was inputted into the database by an entity that declared the topic.~~

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9-11. (cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining whether the user selected to be added to a group e-mail address and/or
virtual team associated with the declared topic;

adding the user to the group e-mail address if it is determined that the user selected to
be added to the group e-mail address; and

adding the user to the virtual team if it is determined that the user selected to be added
to the virtual team.

13. (cancelled)

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14. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

means for enabling one or more users to declare, and associate information with, one or more topics, wherein associated information for a declared topic comprises at least one of a topic description, or one or more keywords relating to the topic;

means for storing declared topics and their associated information;

monitoring means for monitoring ~~the~~ computing activities of a user ~~of a computer~~;

determining means for determining if the ~~computer~~ user appears to be interested in a declared topic based on the monitored activities and based on ~~information stored in a database that is associated with the declared topic~~ topic's associated information; and

notifying means for notifying the ~~computer~~ user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic if it appears that the ~~computer~~ user is interested in the declared topic.

15. (original) The system of claim 14, wherein the monitoring means comprises means for monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user.

16. (cancelled)

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17. (original) The system of claim 15, wherein the means for monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user comprises means for retrieving from an e-mail server one or more e-mail messages addressed to the user and/or sent by the user and for examining the contents of those e-mail messages.

18. (original) The system of claim 14, wherein the monitoring means comprises means for examining one or more instant messages sent to and/or from the user.

19. (original) The system of claim 14, wherein the monitoring means comprises means for monitoring one or more search request messages sent from the user.

20. (cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 14, further comprising:

determining means for determining whether the computer user desires to receive information about the declared topic after notifying the computer user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic; and

~~retrieving means for retrieving from the database information about the declared topic, wherein the information was inputted into the database by an entity that declared the topic.~~

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22-24. (cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

determining means for determining whether the user selected to be added to a group e-mail address and/or virtual team associated with the declared topic;

means for adding the user to the group e-mail address if it is determined that the user selected to be added to the group e-mail address; and

means for adding the user to the virtual team if it is determined that the user selected to be added to the virtual team.

26. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, the computer program product being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising computer instructions for:

enabling one or more users to declare, and associate information with, one or more topics, wherein associated information for a declared topic comprises at least one of a topic description, or one or more keywords relating to the topic;

storing declared topics and their associated information;

monitoring ~~the~~ computing activities of a user ~~of a computer~~;

determining if the ~~computer~~ user appears to be interested in a declared topic based on the monitored activities and based on ~~information stored in a database that is associated with the declared topic~~ topic's associated information; and

notifying the ~~computer~~ user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic if it appears that the ~~computer~~ user is interested in the declared topic.

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27. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 26, wherein the instructions for monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises instructions for monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user.

28. (cancelled)

29. (original) The computer program product of claim 27, wherein instructions for monitoring one or more e-mail messages sent to and/or from the user comprises instructions for retrieving from an e-mail server one or more e-mail messages addressed to the user and/or sent by the user and examining the contents of those e-mail messages.

30. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 26, wherein instructions for monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises instructions for examining one or more instant messages sent to and/or from the user.

31. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 26, wherein instructions for monitoring the computing activities of the user comprises instructions for monitoring one or more search request messages sent from the user.

32. (cancelled)

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33. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

determining whether the ~~computer~~ user desires to receive information about the declared topic after notifying the ~~computer~~ user ~~that the topic has been declared~~ of the existence of the declared topic; and

~~retrieving from the database information about the declared topic, wherein the information was inputted into the database by an entity that declared the topic.~~

34-36. (cancelled)

37. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 26, further comprising instructions for:

determining whether the user selected to be added to a group e-mail address and/or virtual team associated with the declared topic;

adding the user to the group e-mail address if it is determined that the user selected to be added to the group e-mail address; and

adding the user to the virtual team if it is determined that the user selected to be added to the virtual team.